

RESIDENT EVIL

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RE REBOOT



Do the RE 2 and 3 reboot games hit the mark?

RE HARDWARE

The top pieces of hardware to compliment your favourite Resident Evil game.



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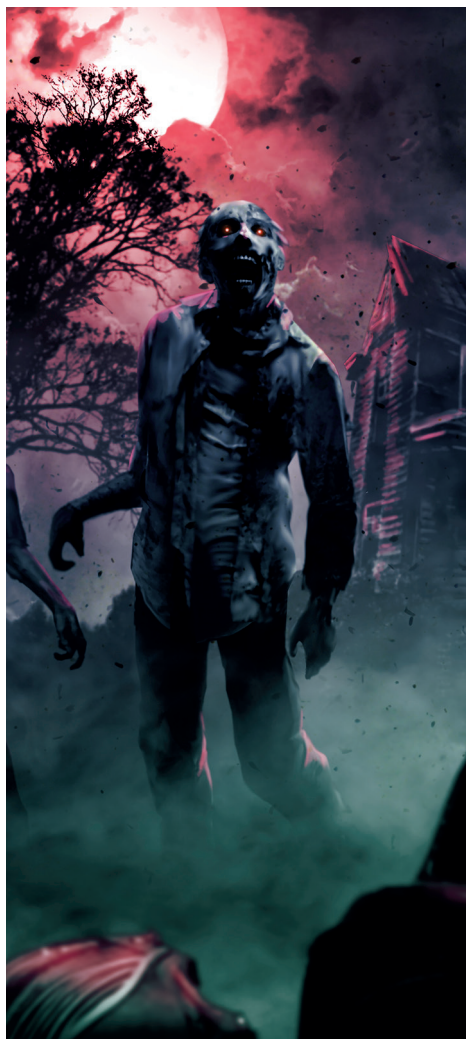
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Editor's Note



I played my first Resident Evil on the PlayStation 1 on it's first release. I was home poorly with some kind of ailment, so it kept me company during the week whilst I was getting better. The wife, who was the girlfriend back then, was in work and this was way before kids so I had the Toshiba 21" TV, the console, the lounge – the house even – all to myself.

Over the week I finished the game and enjoyed every scary moment of it. When I get asked even to this very day my scariest moment in a game, it is those dogs coming through hall windows – I think I wee'd myself a little at the time.

I have played every RE release since – Code Veronica for me being the next champion in the series on the Dreamcast. I had to re-buy the Sega console at the time just to play this game – a game that invigorated the dying console for a time. I still have my blood-stained chainsaw, in it's display case, sitting proudly with much less offensive looking gaming memorabilia.

With the new remastered RE 2 and 3 now with us, and with RE 7 dabbling in the VR space, the franchise is still very much alive and back on a successful course, after a few turkey releases over the years.

This is the first time we have done a Fusion on a gaming franchise so we hope you enjoy the issue, let us know what you think.

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Handwritten signature of Chris Wilkins.

Editor

Chris Wilkins

FUSION



Game : Chainsaw Controller
System : PC, PS2, Gamecube

■ The blood spattered Chainsaw controller is something that all fans of the Resident Evil franchise should own and display along with all their other gaming memorabilia.

I purchased mine from a store in Coventry with the aim of playing my recently acquired PS2 version of Resident Evil 4 using it — I paid quite a lot of money for the controller, and then had the challenge of explaining to the wife what it was and keeping it out of sight from the kids. The controller adds a rather surreal, if somewhat troublesome experience whilst playing the game — here we have a grown adult waving around a plastic depiction of a chainsaw that has already seen killing action, whilst using it to manoeuvre through the game on screen. For me it was, and still is a show piece that sits proud in my display cabinet.





THE POWER OF LIGHT

FIGHTING ZOMBIES WITH LIGHT GUNS



JOYPADS AND WACKY CONTROLLERS ARE NOT THE ONLY WAY TO FIGHT THE ZOMBIE HORDES. ANDREW FISHER COCKS HIS PISTOLS AND GOES IN GUNS BLAZING.

⊕ Of all the genres of gaming, light gun games is probably the one that has been made almost extinct by the never-ending march of technology; light gun games have become an unintentional casualty of the death of the CRT screen. Thankfully for Resident Evil fans and light gun aficionados, the early days of the franchise provided a surprising number of games that still allow you to spend many hours blasting the heads off the casualties of Umbrella Corporation's experiments.

There have been two main series of light-gun games based on Resident Evil — the Gun Survivor titles and the two Chronicles titles first released on Wii before being ported to the PS3, and some of the few examples of 'modern' light-gun games that work on modern TVs.

SURVIVOR PLAYSTATION (2000)



A Windows version was released in 2002, but only in China and Taiwan. The first-person

viewpoint was a first for the series, and Japan and Europe could play with the G-Con light gun (this option was removed in the US after the Columbine shootings). Waking up after a helicopter crash on Sheena Island, our amnesiac pilot must fight hordes of mutants and find out who he really is. Defeating creatures (including the returning Hunters from RE1) awards more powerful pistols. At certain points there are branching paths to be chosen, but critics hated the slow pace of the game.

SURVIVOR 2

PLAYSTATION (2000)

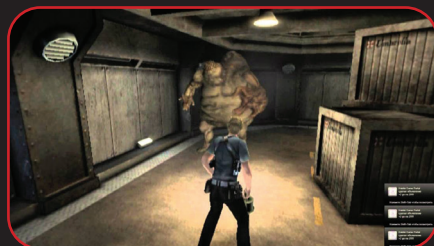


Originally in development by Namco as Biohazard: Fire Zone, the game was renamed and loosely follows events in the Dreamcast game Code: Veronica. Claire Redfield is captured and imprisoned, and must escape with the help of fellow prisoner Steve. Arcade Mode gives a computer-controlled partner to provide covering fire, while Dungeon Mode is played completely solo and against the clock. Confusingly, the events of this game are revealed as just a dream Claire has. Enemies in the game included the Nemesis from RE3.



DEAD AIM

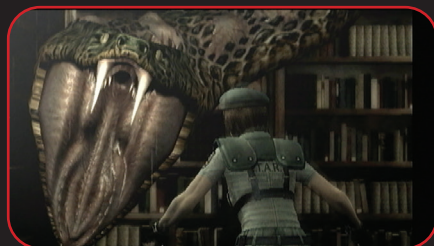
PLAYSTATION 2 (2001)



This PS2 game supported both the light-gun and the USB mouse. In a first for the light-gun series, movement was shown in third-person (much like the original RE games) and aiming shifted to a first-person view. The Umbrella-owned cruise ship Spencer Rain has been infected with the T-virus and former Umbrella employee Morpheus is threatening the US and China with virus-tipped missiles. USSTARTCOM's 'Anti-Umbrella Pursuit Investigation Team' sends Bruce McGivern to work with Chinese MSS female agent Fong Ling and stop the threat. Received as the best game in the Survivor series, there were still complaints about the cheesy dialogue and unoriginal plot.

THE UMBRELLA CHRONICLES

WII (2007), PS3 (2012)



Originally designed for the Wii, the two Chronicles titles were later ported to the PS3 for use with the PS Move add-ons. Japanese players could purchase the Shot Blaster gun, similar to the Wii Zapper in the way it held a wii remote; it had a detachable holster that rotates to allow quick reloading. Narrated



by Albert Wesker, the plot details the fall of the Umbrella Corporation — as portrayed in the recreation of events from RE Zero, the Resident Evil Remake and RE3. The action is seen through the eyes of multiple characters, with melee attacks and quick-time events shown in third-person. Completing the Fourth Survivor scenario unlocks the co-operative two-player mode.

THE DARKSIDE CHRONICLES

Wii (2009), PS3 (2012)




The Resident Evil Chronicles HD Collection had both PS3 Chronicles titles on a single disc. Developer Cavia created the two Chronicles games and the earlier Dead Aim. Acting as a prequel to events in RE4, branching paths and multiple characters are present here with some tweaks to the difficulty (including making headshots easier). Co-operative mode is available from the start, and the evade move allows a player to dodge an enemy by completing a quick-time event. The story of RE2, Code: Veronica and what happened to Leon in the time before RE4 is re-told here. There was controversy when one newspaper reported that the Anglican Church felt the game glamourised the occult, but this was later revealed to be a misunderstanding (and possibly even a PR stunt). Reviews of both Chronicles games were more positive than the Gun Survivor series.



A hand with blood on the fingers holds a wooden sign. The sign has the text "SCARIEST RESIDENT EVIL MOMENTS" in a stylized font. "SCARIEST" and "MOMENTS" are in red, while "RESIDENT EVIL" is in white. The background is dark and smoky, with a skull visible on the left.

SCARIEST RESIDENT EVIL MOMENTS

ARRON DAVIS TAKES A LOOK BACK AT THE COMPLETE RESIDENT EVIL BACKLOG OF GAMES, AND HIGHLIGHTS THOSE MOMENTS THAT SEND A TINGLE DOWN YOUR SPINE OR MAKE YOU JUMP OUT OF YOUR CHAIR!

 The Resident Evil franchise is well-known for its jump scares, and here are a few of my favourites. What is often overlooked though is its more visceral, disturbing and subtle scares that, now let's be honest, other titles, namely the first four Silent Hill games, have done so much better. Make no mistake though, Resi' has its share, so I've thrown some of those in too. I'll avoid the low hanging

fruit of explaining why the scariest thing about Resi is the fact they use voice actors commissioned exclusively from the head injury ward and just go over my personal top ten moments that will either make you throw your joypad up in the air, or throw your stomach lining up due to an overwhelming and penetrating sense of existential dread.

Dogs Jumping Through Window — Resident Evil 1 — Jump Scare

Let's start at the beginning, the elder statesmen of jump scares. At this point in the game you already know there are rabid murderous dogs on the loose, but as far as you're concerned they're outside, you're inside, and never the twain shall meet. A large crash and the sight of shattered window panes quickly dissuades you of that false sense of relative safety.

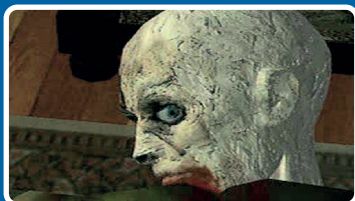
Looks laughably tame by today's standards but this was 1996 remember. I'd gone from playing Sonic the Hedgehog pretty much straight to this. It was quite literally a whole new dimension. I can imagine this is what the first cinema goers felt like when they ran away as a train came hurtling towards the camera.



First Zombie — Resident Evil 1 — Visceral Scare

Now onto the granddaddy of visceral and disturbing scares. You and your team of special forces escape the rabid dogs into the safety of the mansion with big heavy doors between you and the fanatically violent wildlife outside. You'll just have found the premises' residents, called for rescue and were chilling out with your feet up in front of the big open fire. Sorted? No, not sorted. Within about two minutes you're standing over one of the aforementioned residents, who as yet may or may not be evil, as he in turn is crouched over one of your comrades. Is he checking to see if he's okay? Is he helping him? Then 'crunch', no, he's eating him, and now he's finished with the starter he's in the mood for a Jill sandwich.

What's going on in this house? What waits for you behind the next door?, and the next? and the next? The unknown is often scarier than the known as your own mind will always find more creative ways to torture you than any game designer could.



Doctor Salvador — Resident Evil 4 — Visceral Scare

Otherwise known simply as Chainsaw Man, this truly disturbing character really gets under your skin, literally and figuratively. Not a zombie but one of the Ganados infected with the parasitic Las Plagas, so far from being a shambling brain-dead corpse, he's a conscious, living, bullet sponge, fast on his feet and with murderous intent. But why is he wearing a bag on his head? What could be so horrific that he feels it needs to be kept hidden even from his fellow, already vomit inducing, Ganados, and what kind of Dr. looks and behaves this way? He makes Dr. Mengele look like doctor Dolittle and his scream as he swings his chainsaw at your neck will stay with you long after you switch the game off.



The Licker Mirror — Resident Evil 2 — Jump Scare

Something we have come to accept is that doors in Resident Evil are usually akin to force fields, impenetrable barriers that separate universes. The only thing that crosses them is you — everything else is forever imprisoned within it's own pocket dimension. If the room is empty then you're safe. So when a Licker with about as much regard for sealed off pocket dimensions as a diarrhetic Doctor Who looking for the toilet planet, crashes from the adjoining room into yours via a two-way mirror you'd better hope your commode is on standby.



Nemesis Jumping Through Window— Resident Evil 3 — Jump Scare

This jump scare comes from taking your comfort blanket of familiarity, ripping it from you, twirling it round and using it to whip you in the balls. You find yourself in the police station within a familiar corridor you've visited a thousand times before in Resident Evil 2, where the only real threat was the odd zombie, and if you were unlucky enough to get stopped by one of them there was a handy little safe room just off to the side.



This corridor is practically a holiday destination as far as the world of Resident Evil 2 goes. Not Resident Evil 3 though. With a crescendo of broken glass and splintered timbers, Nemesis kicks open the door of your safe space with his big size 18s. We already know this bloke is as hard as the Financial Times crossword with an erection just on his own, but what's that on his arm now? Ohhhh it's a rocket launcher he must have previously had stashed in his slacks. Great. RUN AWAAAAAY!

Crimson Heads— Resident Evil 1 remake — Jump Scare

We'd had it ingrained in our minds for decades. From the old Romero films through to the first few Resident Evil games. Zombies can take some beating, sure, but eventually, after sufficient punishment or a single bullet or blow to the head they will fall. And when they're dead they're dead. So, imagine the shock playing this remake of the original Resi when they decided to jump back up after what was clearly just a power nap and chase you at break neck speed. A proper pant pooping position to ponder.



Corpse In The Water— Resident Evil 7 — Jump Scare

Remember that bit in Poltergeist when the mom falls in the muddy pool and the corpses float up right in her face? Well imagine that in VR. Now you have a muddy pool in your pants.



Lake Monster — Resident Evil 4 — Jump Scare

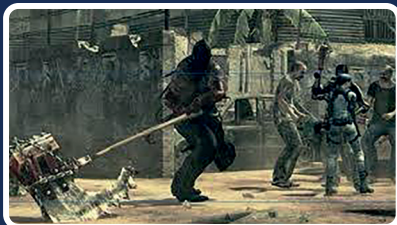
You approach a high ledge overlooking a lake to see a suspicious looking boat floating on it (what isn't suspicious in a Residential Evil game?).

You get out your binoculars to do some peeping and see one of the local 'el Bobbies' who escorted you to this miserable place, now dead, being thrown overboard by two Ganados. The officer's body is then devoured whole by a horrible giant, well, thing. You're a seasoned gamer so you know the score, you'll have to fight this thing soon. 'There's no rush though, i won't try to cross the lake yet', you say to yourself, 'I'll take a look around, pick up some ammo, save my game, OH!! I could do with a few bits to replenish my energy. I'll see if I can bag a few fish at the edge of the lake, then I'll'..... BANG !!!!! Seemingly out of nowhere, Moby Dick's crack smoking brother leaps from the deep and takes you out in one. A true throw your joypad through the telly moment.



Executioners Axe — Resident Evil 5 — Jump Scare

In many ways The Executioner is Resident Evil 5's chainsaw bloke but with one key difference, his axe is silent. A slow lumbering ogre of a man, in ideal circumstances he would be relatively easily avoided, but when do you ever find yourself in ideal circumstances in a Resident Evil game? You skillfully bob and weave your way around him trying not to make eye contact, like a Tory politician avoiding a Big Issue seller — you run round the



corner, perhaps pick up a box of bullets, you see a few of the lesser enemies in front of you, no problem, you shoot one in the knee, make your way round them, maybe top up your health with a quick herb, the executioner must be miles behind me, right? WHAM!!!! An axe the same size as a list of games Anita Sarkeesian has never played descends ferociously out of nowhere onto the back of your head with the same grace and force as your mom sitting down.

Mr.X— Resident Evil 2 Original And Remake — Visceral and jump scares

If 2020 were to be personified as a video game enemy it would be Mr. X (yes I realise I've just horribly dated this article).

An omnipresent existential threat that you feel you're unlikely to outlive. I honestly think the X in his name is a place holder or censorship mark for all the expletives thrown into the air whenever he's encountered.

Before I continue I can already hear you crying 'Nemesis rules, Mr. X drools'.

Well, put your can of Carling down, leave your cousin alone, wipe the spittle from your chin and be prepared to be introduced to an entirely new concept, subtly. Nemesis is to Mr. X what Kiss is to Black Sabbath, what Prisoner Cell Block H is to The Shawshank Redemption.

Mr. X doesn't need gimmicks or spectacle. He doesn't need vestigial malformed tentacles of grotesquerie, he has a big coat. He doesn't need a face like Janet Street Porter after a transporter accident with a pancake, he has a hat. Mr. X doesn't even need to run, or burp the word STARS every five seconds like a drunk who has fallen over face first on Hollywood Boulevard.

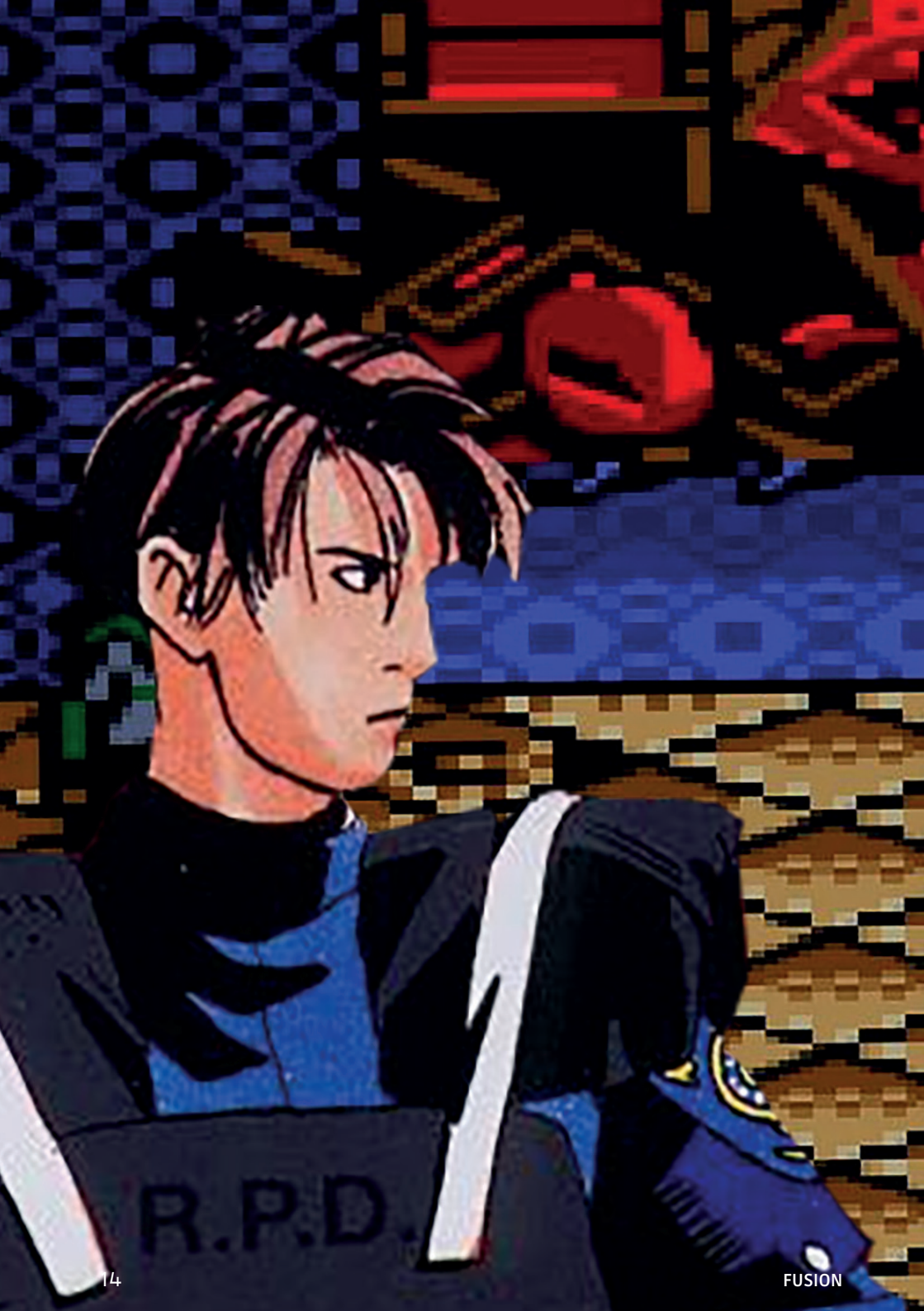
Mr. X just has to look at you with that stony expressionless face and stroll casually towards you to instill piercing anxiety.

He's not rushing, as sooner or later he will get you. I was going to write a joke here along the lines of Michael Myers will always be scarier than (insert a non scary horror film villain) but while googling 'crap horror movie villains' one of the first ones I came across was literally Nemesis from the god awful second Resident Evil movie.

Mr. X is unarguably one of the scariest villains in all gaming history, he does the lot — a one stop shop for all your varying shades of terror. From jump scares like punching through pre-rendered backgrounds to try and get at you, to the visceral dread induced by just hearing his heavy boots echo through the police station — no rocket launcher required to make you redecorate your gusset.

Yeah, okay, he goes all melodramatic at the end after you've shoved him in a pool of molten metal, but we can let him off with that as you did just ruin his lovely leather jacket.





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FAIL

Game : RE Gaiden
Year : 2001
System : Gameboy Color

■ The Resident Evil games were proving a huge hit on the main consoles of the time — it therefore must have seemed fitting for Capcom at the time to port the experience to the handhelds. Resident Evil Gaiden was one such title that landed on the Gameboy Colour.

With the limited capabilities of the console compared to it's grown-up cousins, it was always going to be difficult to replicate the 'survival horror' experience in portable fashion — and unfortunately, Gaiden fails RE fans on all levels. There are no multiple trademark camera angles here; the combat is poor where every zombie encounter puts you into cumbersome first person mode where you have to push the action button at the right moment; there are no puzzles to solve (another standard of the franchise) and the GB Colour slows the game down terribly when there is more than one zombie on the screen.

So this is not the game fans of the genre were expecting, and maybe Capcom should have, on hind sight, kept away from the platform.

RESIDENT EVIL™

REVELATIONS



**GRAEME MASON
DISCOVERS THAT
RESIDENT EVIL
REVELATIONS IS A
LITTLE BIT MORE THAN
A PIDDLY SIDE STORY**

■ When the first Revelations game was released on the 3DS in 2012, it passed me by. I didn't own the Nintendo handheld, and probably would have dismissed the game anyway as a cheap imitation of the survival horror series that I loved so much. I'd played the original three games on the PlayStation, following up with the magnificent Resident Evil 4 on the GameCube. I had no time for piddling side-stories that completely missed what made the games so great for me: atmosphere, tension, survival and exploring desolate, mysterious locations.

Oh, how silly I was.

But then redemption. By 2013, Resident Evil Revelations had proven popular enough

to be ported to a range of home consoles, including the Xbox 360. Obviously the 3D display was now abandoned, but that didn't concern me. Here was a horror game, laden with gore and saliva-dripping monsters, taking place over a series of grim and sometimes over-elaborate locations that strongly reminded me of the Spencer Mansion from the very first Resident Evil 17 years earlier.

Set between Resident Evil 4 and 5, Revelations follows the agents of counter-bioterrorism force the BSAA. The game jogs around different timelines, from a terrorist attack on the city of Terragrigia to an

abandoned cruise ship called the Queen Zenobia. Playing a range of agents (including series stalwart Chris Redfield), there are mysteries to solve, mazes to negotiate, mild puzzles to solve and, naturally, plenty of drooling horrors to shoot at. And it's here where the game really comes alive: keeping to the bio-terror theme, the series' regular zombie enemies are largely absent, replaced with lethally quick genetically-modified creatures that stalk the player throughout the game. Fortunately each character

Below: Just when you thought it was safe to go outside....





Above: You can play as a range of agents — some will be very familiar!

has special abilities and a stack of powerful weapons which can be upgraded to help their offensive capability, with the derelict ship proving a particularly moody location, a floating Spencer Mansion full of danger and biohazards.

Buoyed by the success, Capcom released Revelations 2 in 2015, and while it is essentially more of the same, there's plenty more for fans to enjoy. The sequel also includes a hugely-improved Raid mode where players can take on solo or co-op missions, upgrading their characters and weapons while unlocking further features inside an

experimental control room run by the infamous Red Queen. The main story itself features Redfield's sister, Claire, along with Barry Burton and his daughter Moira. When they are attacked and taken to a mysterious (and apparently deserted island), Burton encounters a little girl with supernatural abilities as the player uncovers another tale of

intrigue, leading back to a familiar antagonistical face from the series.

With both games now available on the Nintendo Switch, there's never been a better time to go cruising with Resident Evil Revelations and take on the slobbering BOWs of terror group Veltra.



TOP FIVE >>

The Top 5 pieces of hardware to improve your Resident Evil experience

by Alan Hammerton

There is something about Resident Evil that seemingly compels companies to create weirder and wackier hardware than for almost any other game series. We take a look at five pieces of hardware that would look great in any RE fans collection.



01 // PS1 Resident Evil Gamepad Released 1998 — by ASCII Corp.

When is a controller not a controller? When it is the Resident Evil 'dedicated' controller. Released as a limited edition in 1998 alongside Resident Evil 2, it was designed to not only compliment the new game but also to be compatible with the original Resident Evil and Resident Evil: Director's Cut games.

Holding it, you will find it impossible not to notice the handles — one is designed to feel like you are holding a knife and the other replicates the feeling of holding a pistol. The normal button layout has also been tweaked to provide the more useful buttons to be under your finger (well that's the theory anyway). It's rather odd having the R1 button sitting on the top of the controller rather than in its usual shoulder position. The other thing you may notice is the lack of analogue sticks, not that surprising when you think that this controller pre-dates the release of the Dual-Shock controllers by nearly four months.

Of all the dedicated RE controllers, this is the one that you could actually use to play the game to completion, which is quite a compliment.



02 // Sega Dreamcast Claire and S.T.A.R.S. Limited Edition Console Released 2000 — by Sega

As we pretty much expect, Japanese gamers seem to get the majority of rare and unusual console variants. True to form, Japanese Resident Evil fans were treated to not one, but two special editions Dreamcasts released to help promote Resident Evil Code: Veronica.

Both were released under the 'Sega Dreamcast CODE Veronica Console' banner but are more widely referred to as the 'Claire' and 'S.T.A.R.S.' Dreamcasts. The 'Claire' variant is a skeleton case, in a gorgeous deep red colour with a matching controller, VMU and RE merchandise. Only 1,800 were made, making them both genuinely rare and rather expensive to buy. The 'S.T.A.R.S.' version is even rarer, with only 200 being manufactured — another skeleton shell, this time in a deep blue with the 'S.T.A.R.S.' logo painted onto the top. Much like the other variant — matching controllers, VMU and other goodies are included in the box. If you want one, better start selling body parts as they are eye-wateringly expensive.



03 // RE 4 CHAINSAW CONTROLLERS Released 2006 — by Nuby

Very much a case of form over function, as a collectable it is everything that a Resident Evil fan could want. Housed in a faux wood and glass case with a blood splattered chainsaw blade sticking out of the side, the controller looks amazing. For any RE fan, this would be a prized part of a collection — just don't try and use it, it's as awful to use as it is nice to look at. Badly placed sticks and buttons do not make the controls fall naturally to hand; you end up fighting the controller more than the zombies on screen. Maybe not one to use where anyone has a camera to hand unless you want embarrassing pictures to spread on social media. Should you desire one, be aware there are two versions — the PS2/PC version has an orange main body with a faux steel handle and the GameCube version has a yellow body with a rather nice fake wooden handle, other than that they are pretty much identical. Just make sure you check it has the detachable cables included, finding replacements is impossible.



04 // Nintendo GameCube Resident Evil 4 Console Released 2005 — by Nintendo

It's often said that Nintendo hated us in Europe, especially in the 90s and early 2000s, as we seemed to be an afterthought when they released new games or systems. That may or may not be true but one thing is for sure, they loved us enough to release a limited edition Europe only Resident Evil 4 themed GameCube. Whilst at first glance it looks just like any other silver Gamecube, if you take a closer look you'll see both the console and controller are two-tone, platinum on top and black on the bottom. It's not exactly the most exciting colour combo but let's give Nintendo some credit, at least they tried.

The only other nod to Resident Evil is it's custom black insert on the console lid that sports the RE4 logo, in the same platinum colour as the console. The same motif is applied in black to the front of the controller. The whole package does come in a rather nice box, but it's a bit of shame that more effort was seemingly spent on a cardboard box than on the system itself.




05 // Resident Evil Magnum Blaster and Knife Set Released 2011 — by Interworks

Our love of light gun games is well known here at Fusion, it's a genre sadly missing on the current-gen systems — most likely we will never see another released. Go back a few console generations to the original Wii and you could find a couple of rather good Resident Evil based light gun games. This is fantastic, but it loses somewhat in the experience department if you are forced to use one of the stark white Wiimote 'guns' that could be purchased from dodgy third-party manufacturers.

Thank goodness for the 'Resident Evil Magnum Blaster and Knife Set' from Interworks. Consisting of a rather nice realistic-looking gun controller to hold the Wiimote and a massively huge blade which cleverly incorporates the Wii nunchuck controller as the handle. Subtle is not a word that can be used here. This is another rarity in the world of novelty controllers, one that actually does add to the game. You can feel totally badass as you stab and shoot your way through the zombie hordes.



CRAIG TURNER LOVES A SCARE AND THE RE FRANCHISE DELIVERS THEM IN SPADES. HERE CRAIG TAKES A LOOK AT THE CHARACTERS THAT HAVE GIVEN HIM THE BIGGEST SCARES, THE ONES THAT HAVE SEEN HIM LITERALLY JUMPING OUT OF HIS CHAIR.

 T-virus. Progenitor. Las Plagas. Uroboros.

The biohazards unleashed around the world in the Resident Evil franchise are numerous, with infection sources sometimes going back hundreds of years. Their effects are sometimes accidents, more often they're the results of experimentation. The result however, whilst unpredictable, has always

been biological mutations with a desire to kill. The typical enemies encountered are all enough on their own to take you down if you don't defend yourself properly, but only a few are so grotesquely frightening or seemingly unstoppable enough to keep you constantly on your toes and have your palms sweating in the anticipatory panic of their arrival.

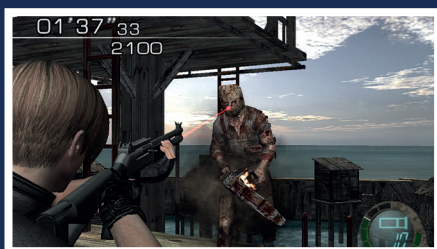


NIGHTMARE FUEL

Giant Chainsaw Man — Resident Evil 4

Resident Evil 4 not only evolved the franchise into the next generation with a game that reinvigorated the series, it dialled up the scare factor with more in-your-face threat than any of the isometric titles that came before it.

The Las Plagas parasite was a big change from the undead and man-made bio weapons seen before, infecting and mutating living people. Amongst these are Dr. Salvador and the Bella sisters; super fast, concealed-faced lunatics wielding chainsaws with a bunch of hit points and the ability to end your mission with a swift decapitation. The unmistakable 2-stroke chainsaw engine chugging away and drawing ever nearer is enough to have you running from any trash mob and reloading in a panic, lest you end up headless in seconds. Daddy of these scares though comes exclusively courtesy in the 'Mercenaries' mode, where an uncontrollable giant version of this guy appears, psychotically swinging a double chainsaw as he lunges towards you, failing to recoil from the arsenal you unload in a frenzied attempt to stop the inevitable.



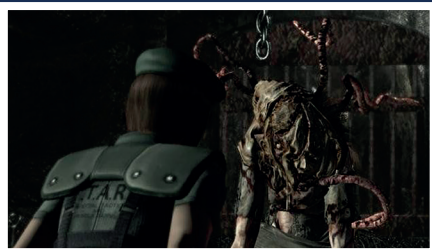
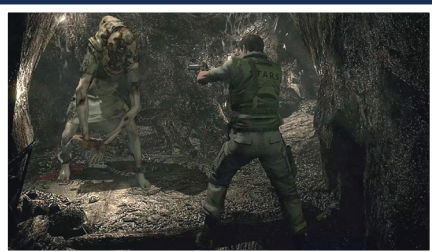
Scagedead — RE Revelations

The T-Abyss virus gave rise to all manner of creepy nautical mutations and variants of familiar creatures seen before. Unfortunately for those aboard the Queen Zenobia, when it all went pear-shaped those with the strongest resistance to the outbreak eventually fell to a far uglier fate. Whilst retaining more of their human physical and mental identity, the mutation into a powerful blob with a huge jagged-toothed mouth, extra appendages and a biological circular saw on one arm that guaranteed an instant kill for anyone caught up in it's path ensures players instantly engage in a sprint to avoid the encounter at all costs. The retained humanity actually creates more fear than the more beastly enemies, thanks to the whining chainsaw-like sound and the twisted and eternally anguished calls of the parasitic human head that remains fused to the creature. Terrifying and disturbing in equal measure.



Lisa Trevor — Resident Evil (Remake)

Absent from the original game (which already had plenty of scares and beasts to unleash on the audience of a new franchise), this unnatural life form first appeared to taunt Chris Redfield and Jill Valentine in the massively overhauled GameCube remake as an aide to the extended back story. The unfortunate victim of decades of testing by Oswell Spencer, William Birkin and countless others under the influence of Umbrella, Lisa outlived her also-captive mother only because of her unique physiology. Although technically still human, she absorbed variations of the Progenitor, G, Nemesis-T and countless other viruses to become a deformed, super-strong mutation that even Umbrella abandoned through fears she could not be controlled or defeated. The terrifying screams of this bullet-sponge encountered in incredibly tight rooms with tentacle defences and ridiculous strength, evoke complex feelings of both sympathy and a high desire to destroy this abomination at the same time — neither of which you'll have time to process as she draws closer and you scramble for the nearest exit.



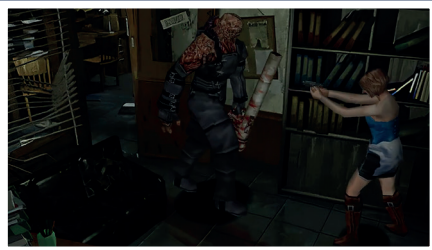
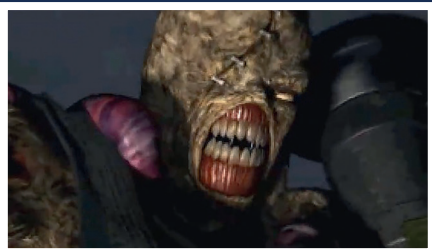
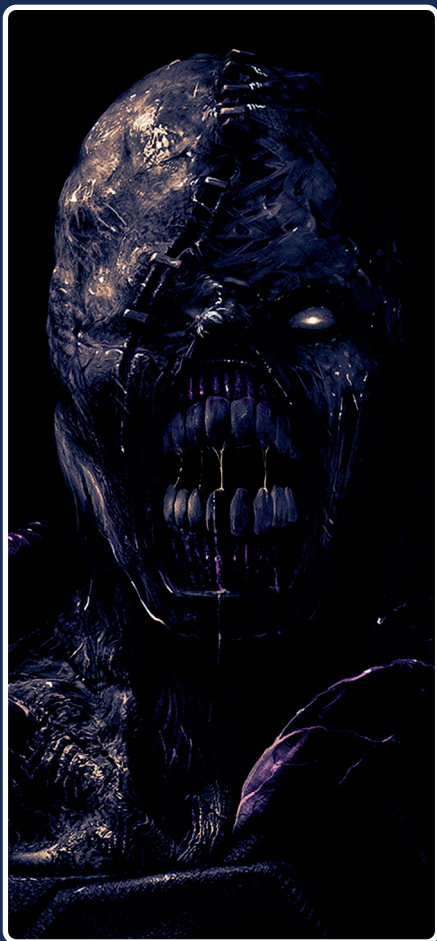
Mr. X — Resident Evil 2 (Remake)

The replay value of the second game in the series was enhanced with two different missions for the main characters, a second mission for each and the introduction of one super skilled Umbrella agent. The 'B' scenario for each character was the real treat though, giving not just a new path to take but the added threat of an independent-thinking humanoid Tyrant (Mr. X) in an unassuming custom trenchcoat chasing you around. Scary as it was, Capcom upgraded this bonus enemy for 2019's remake into the ever-present and far more deadly antagonist that pursues you from the beginning of your first game, stomping around and absorbing your pitiful attempts to slow it down using nothing but its fists; throwing you around like a rag doll and intelligently tracking you from room to room until you can get enough distance between you and him to temporarily escape. Less mutated than the other Tyrant variants, now walking faster than you can run and no longer bound by the barrier of doors, this biological Terminator will continue to chase you in your nightmares.



Nemesis — Resident Evil 3

Take a T-103 Tyrant like Mr.X, inject it with the NE-alpha parasite, scale up the intelligence, give it a weapon and program it with a purpose and you have Nemesis. Many NE-T-Types were produced, but only one saw action and it was Jill Valentine's worst nightmare. The unstoppable and determined force of Nemesis brings ridiculous Tyrant strength, rapid tentacle-based mutations capable of spreading the virus at will, the ability to pursue with calculation and even a rocket launcher to give the most aptly-named foe the franchise ever had. Breaking through walls, appearing behind doors in your face, mutating with each takedown and not even a dip in industrial sludge taking it down, the terrifying call of 'S.T.A.R.S' and monstrous roars as he charges at you lets you know he isn't messing around, and in a city turned to chaos, it's only goal is to kill you. Terminator-like determination, the deformed, stapled face and razor teeth and all the jump-scares of other Resi encounters combined, Nemesis is the very epitome of survival horror.



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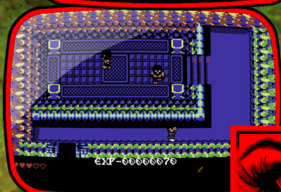
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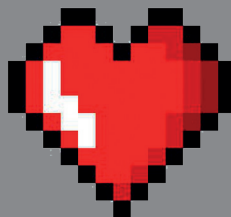
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FUSION





FUSION



Game : Resident Evil 2 Board Game
Year : 2018
Publisher : Steamforged Games

British board-game company Steamforged Games was founded in 2014, on the back of it's first successful release Guild Ball. In 2018 it ran a Kickstarter campaign, raising an incredible £800,000 to create an officially licensed board game based on RE2. There were multiple stretch goals achieved, creating extra characters, monsters, and other 3D miniatures. The exclusive Retro Pack redesigned the game's item cards to look like those from the PlayStation game's inventory screen.

The base game allows up to four players (controlling Claire, Leon, Ada, and Kendo) through a series of scenarios set in different areas of Raccoon City, including the iconic Police Department. Items including weapons and healing herbs can be picked up, with twenty different miniature monsters to encounter. With every turn the players draw a card from the Tension Deck, revealing a new event or puzzle to conquer. There have been three expansion packs released so far — the B-Files was part of the Kickstarter, adding more areas, events, and enemies; the Survival Horror pack has five new survivor characters to rescue, new weapons, and a new game mode and finally, the 4th Survivor expansion, inspired by the unlockable mini game in the video game, gives the players control of HUNK or Tofu in two new scenarios as they escape the Raccoon City Police Department building.



TIMELINE OF EVIL

ANDREW FISHER PEEKS OUT FROM BEHIND THE SOFA AND TAKES A LOOK AT THE RESIDENT EVIL TIMELINE



**UMBRELLA
CORPORATION**



■ Resident Evil Zero was developed as a GameCube exclusive and prequel to the first Resident Evil — Bravo Team member Rebecca Chambers teams up with escaped convict and former Marine Billy Coen using the 'partner zapping' mechanic. A missing train in the Arkaly Mountains, an abandoned training facility and mysterious leeches reveal the origins of the T-Virus. As the game ends, Rebecca heads towards a mysterious mansion.

The game started as a title for the N64's 64DD add-on and then was made smaller to fit onto a cartridge and ultimately upgraded to the new GameCube console.



RESIDENT EVIL

S.T.A.R.S has lost contact with Bravo Team sent in to investigate unusual murders near Raccoon City. Alpha Team's Chris Redfield, Jill Valentine, Albert Wesker and Barry Burton take shelter in a strange mansion. The player can control Chris (stronger with limited firepower and a six-item inventory) or Jill (weaker, but with stronger firepower, a handy lockpick and eight-item inventory).

The door opening sequences hid the necessary loading times for extra textures and graphics. Shinji Mikami was inspired by the Outlook Hotel from the film of Stephen King's *The Shining*, and during development abandoned the first-person perspective after seeing the forced perspective of rival horror game *Alone In The Dark*. The game was censored for its overseas releases, including removing the deaths of Joseph and Kenneth and parts of the black & white intro movie. That intro movie was designed to frighten the player,

as were the many 'jump scare' moments — most players will remember the dogs jumping through the windows, or that first sighting of the grey-headed zombie feasting on a victim. It was an impressive start to the franchise, despite the cheesy dialogue ('Jill sandwich', anyone?) and the awkward tank controls (where the character must rotate and then move forward). There are also multiple endings to discover, based on rescuing the other survivors and whether the mansion is still standing.

Reviewers coined the term 'survival horror' to describe the game, which became a distinct video game genre — namely, facing horrifying opponents while dealing with limited ammunition/weapons and juggling items. Next Generation magazine said it 'manages to be as genuinely scary as a good horror film', while legendary Japanese gaming magazine Famitsu awarded it 38/40 (one of the three highest-scoring games in the magazine in 1996 with *Super Mario 64* and *Tekken 2*, and one of only ten games to score 38 or higher up to that year). It would be followed by Capcom's *Dino Crisis* (replacing zombies with dinosaurs, drawing inspiration from *Jurassic Park*).



RESIDENT EVIL 2

Two months after the events in the first game, rookie cop Leon starts his first shift in Raccoon City while student Claire Redfield looks for her missing brother Chris. Unfortunately, the T-virus has mutated most of the city's population into zombies and much of the police force is already dead. In the corridors of the Raccoon City Police Department building, Leon encounters a new monster and the hunt for the G-virus



begins.

Development of the sequel had stalled but got back on track with a new storyline and FMVs created by using stop-motion animation on action figures. With a choice of two playable characters, there are four scenarios; complete the first scenario with one character and then you play through the game with the other. Actions by one character affect the other, such as the availability of items, and the overall performance is ranked at the end. Achieving high ranks unlocks two additional mini games. 'The Fourth Survivor' follows heavily armed Umbrella Special Teams member Hunk, who must get to his extraction point. 'Tofu Survivor' gives you just a knife and

herbs to escape the police station. These action-based mini-games are a fun addition to a classic title. Of course, players still had to cope with the 'tank' controls and the laborious need to use a typewriter (and find ribbons) to save the game. The US and European versions featured much gorier death sequences for the characters than the original Japanese version.

Famitsu rated it the fourth-best PlayStation game of all time, and it regularly features in lists of the greatest games of all time. And after an appearance of the game in the sitcom *Spaced* (series 1, episode 2 – 'Art', written by Simon Pegg and Jessica Hynes, directed by Edgar Wright), Wright and Pegg would go on to create the classic zom-rom-com movie *Shaun of the Dead*. We had to wait until 2019 for the definitive remake.



RESIDENT EVIL™ 3

N E M E S I S

Starting 24 hours before the events of RE2, Jill Valentine is trying to escape Raccoon City when she encounters a new type of enemy — Nemesis. This towering monster has a rocket launcher for an arm, and Jill needs help. She gets it from unlikely allies — three members of the Umbrella Biohazard Countermeasure Service (UBCS). With Nemesis relentlessly pursuing Jill, she must find a way to slow down or stop the creature and leave by helicopter before Raccoon City's fate is sealed. Completing the game can earn extra costumes for Jill and unlocks the 'Mercenaries: Operation Mad Jackal' mini-game. Controlling one of the three UBCS members, the player must cross Raccoon City in a limited time, hampered by limited weapons. Fortunately, extra time can be earned by killing enemies or performing certain actions. The player's ranking in Mercenaries and the main game can also unlock extra 'files' to read, detailing what happened to the characters after the conclusion of the game's story.

Shinji Mikami helped produce this third instalment at the same time as Code: Veronica was in development, and Capcom wanted it to carry the number 3 to keep the PlayStation series consistently numbered. The original scenario was set on a cruise ship with agent HUNK, but with multiple RE games in development, Capcom chose a team headed by Kazuhiro Aoyama to work with Mikami.



(Meanwhile, Hideki Kamiya's team began work on what would turn into RE4.) The initial scenario of someone escaping Raccoon City was intended as a spin-off but became a 'main timeline' title when Capcom changed that character to become the returning Jill Valentine. The Nemesis itself is a formidable opponent, inspired by the relentless liquid T-1000 in the movie Terminator 2: Judgement Day. Aiming for a more action-oriented game, Mikami added a fast 180-degree turn and a 'dodge' move; handy when up to nine enemies could be onscreen at once, tracking the player with improved AI. The Raccoon City setting allowed much richer environments and there were more types of zombie to kill. A brief demo of RE3 shipped with the PlayStation release of Dino Crisis.



RESIDENT EVIL CODE: Veronica

After a failed attempt to port RE2 to the Sega Saturn, development started on an original game for Sega's new Dreamcast console. Set during the events of RE3, Claire Redfield has been imprisoned on a remote island after attempting to raid an Umbrella facility in Paris. With the help of fellow inmate Steve, Claire escapes an outbreak of the T-Virus and they end up in a hidden research facility in Antarctica – where the T-Veronica strain is unleashed. Chris Redfield arrives to rescue his sister, but can they escape the deadly new mutants? Parts of the game are in full 3D with a dynamic camera system, reflecting the greater power of the Dreamcast, but interiors retain the classic pre-rendered backgrounds. Should the player take too long to complete a level, the Nemesis (from RE3) will appear to hunt the player down.

Much of the development was outsourced to Shinji Mikami's Flagship studio as Capcom was busy with what became RE3. The settings and Gothic architecture gave the game a very different feel to its predecessors. The Dreamcast game outsold Shenmue in its first week on the shop shelves and went on to make 1.5 million sales worldwide. Game Informer and GamesRadar included it in their lists of the best Dreamcast titles, but it did not stay an exclusive to that system.



4 resident evil

Resident Evil 4 has gone down in gaming history as one of the best titles in the RE series and is often considered a contender for the best game of all time. It's development was very troubled but the wait was worth it.

Set six years after RE2, Leon Kennedy is called in to rescue Ashley — the daughter of the U.S. President. Heading to a rural village in Spain, Leon encounters villagers taken over by Las Plagas; a parasite that holds interest for the Umbrella Corporation. The villagers are referred to as Los Ganados, meaning the 'cattle'. Rescuing Ashley from a cult in an abandoned church, Leon finds out the plan was to infect the President by controlling his daughter. With the help of a scientist, Leon goes to a research facility on a nearby island and encounters two important people from his past and must stop their plot.

The most dramatic change for the gameplay was the aiming mode. When Leon raised his gun, the perspective switched to an over-the-shoulder (third person) viewpoint allowing enemies to be targeted. Within the game were regular quick-time events, where the player had to press buttons or move in a direction to survive. Parts of the game are an escort mission, with Leon having to guide Ashley through harmful areas.

Completing the main game unlocks 'The Mercenaries' sub-game. Here the player must score points against the clock, creating a chain of kills to earn the most. Extra time can be earned, and melee attacks are effective against lesser enemies. Scoring a high star ranking will unlock extra characters, depending on the version of the game (some unlocked characters have bonus costumes in the

later Remakes & Remasters).

Pre-ordering got a Prologue art book, T-shirt, and the GameCube game. GameStop sold a limited edition in a tin box with the game, art book, an animation cel of Leon and a soundtrack CD. Australia's collector's edition had a bonus disc with interviews and behind the scenes footage shot by the creators.

The critics went wild, lauding the improved characters and voice acting — a real highlight for the series. RE4 went on to win multiple awards, tying with Kingdom Hearts II for Famitsu's prestigious Game of the Year 2005. Edge and Nintendo Power ranked it the second-best game of all time, beaten to the top spot by The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time. Across all formats and remakes, it has gone on to sell 7.5 million copies.



RESIDENT EVIL

This next instalment was specifically designed for co-operative play, with the computer controlling one character for a solo player. The setting is a fictional African country, five years after the events of RE4. Bioterrorism Security Assessment Alliance agents Chris Redfield and his new partner Sheva are trying to prevent the sale of a biological weapon on the black market but encounter new victims of Las Plagas. After finding the source of a new virus strain and encountering a familiar face from the past, Chris and Sheva board an oil tanker to stop the launch of missiles containing the new Uroboros virus.

Two players can take part, either in split-screen or online. Action is split up by checkpoints, with the players deliberately separated at some points. Split-screen players can trade weapons and objects, and it is possible to resuscitate a downed team-mate. Weapons can be upgraded during the game by spending cash found. Completing the main game unlocks a version of the Mercenaries mini game, set in enclosed spaces but without

access to any customised weapons; the player must find weapons and ammo as they fight against the time limit. After release, the PS3 and Xbox 360 versions added a downloadable 'Versus' multiplayer mode. This featured two game types, with players taking part in two-person teams. 'Slayers' was a points-based challenge, while 'Survivors' required teams to hunt each other down.

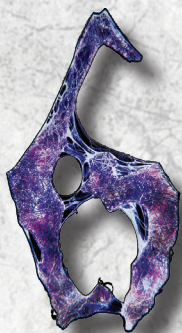


Development was produced and directed by Jun Takeuchi, with Keiji Inafune supervising. Clover Studios, set up by former Capcom employees, helped during development. Motion capture was used for all human characters. Actress Karen Dyer played the voice of Sheva and she used her circus skills background to perform motion capture stunts (including one filming session that lasted up to 14 hours).

There was controversy over the African setting, with allegations of racism clouding the launch. Blasting the hordes of Majini (the African people infected with Las Plagas parasites) was demeaning to black people. Although the second playable character Sheva was a black African woman — not revealed in the original E3 trailer — that some saw as trying to counter the bad publicity. Karen Dyer revealed the character was always planned to be black.

While it could never hope to live up to RE4's critical acclaim, reviews for RE5 were generally positive despite the controversy. It picked up awards but not the coveted Game of the Year status. Sales across formats have reached more than 11 million, making it Capcom's third highest-selling game of all time (at the time of writing).





RESIDENT EVIL.

With a development staff of over 600 led by Hiroyuki Kobayashi, RE6 spans four interlinked scenarios with multiple characters to control. A worldwide bio-terror threat sees Leon Kennedy and Chris Redfield tackle new enemies including the J'avo; these mutants come in many forms and can heal and adapt as they are injured. The player can select one of three campaign scenarios, accompanied by a computer-controlled AI partner or a second player co-operatively. There is also a four-player mode and the option for a 'Lone Wolf' solo player. New moves include shooting while sliding and a dodge roll. Tablets can be made



from herbs to help heal the player character, and if one character is dying the other has a short time to revive them and continue. Finishing the first three scenarios unlocks the final mission that brings all the storylines together. With a daring attack that infects the US President, can S.T.A.R.S. and BAAS work together to stop the plot of Neo-Umbrella to unleash yet another bioweapon worldwide?

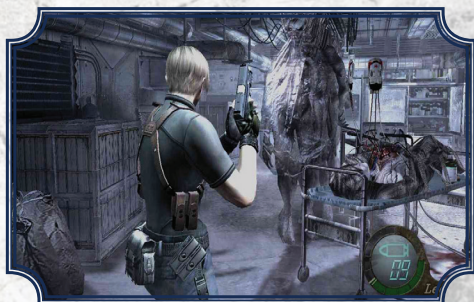
The game spans two DVDs and has two extra modes. 'Mercenaries' sees the players in the session fight for survival against waves



of enemies. 'Agent Hunt' is unlocked on completing the first three scenarios. Here the player takes control of the enemies in other players' online sessions.

The release and critical response were affected by Capcom's decision to count on-disc content as DLC, unlocked by buying it. Capcom thus released an online patch, adding an extra difficulty mode (No Hope) and the ability to play the final campaign (featuring Ada) without first completing the other three. This was followed by a second set of DLC, adding three new online modes. 'Predator' lets one player control the mutant Ustanak in tracking down the other players (up to 5). 'Survivors' is a more typical deathmatch mode for 2-6 players. 'Onslaught' has two players fighting against waves of zombies; creating a combo chain sends extra zombies to the other player's side.

Combined sales across formats have reached 9.2 million to date, although it failed to sell as well in it's first year as Capcom had predicted.



RESIDENT EVIL

biohazard

Ethan Winters is drawn to a remote Louisiana plantation by a message that seems to come from his long-dead wife. Finding Mia imprisoned in the basement of the house, Ethan meets the Baker family and discovers that a new bioweapon might be involved in the family's strange behaviour. Can Ethan rescue Mia alive from the house and escape the Molded monsters in the basement?

The custom RE Engine portrays the action from a first-person perspective, and the game was made available for Virtual Reality in the form of the PS VR headset to immerse the player. The Xbox 'Play Anywhere' version allows cross-saving between PC and Xbox One versions and purchasing on one store allows play on the other format.



DLC packs have included Not A Hero, Banned Footage Vol. 1 and Vol. 2, and End of Zoe, expanding the story further. Not A Hero features Chris Redfield (who shows up at the end of the main game), while End of Zoe is based on the player choosing to save his wife Mia rather than Zoe and shows her fate. Volume 1 features new mode 'Ethan Must Die' and two new scenarios, while Volume 2 includes the mode Jack's 55th Birthday and two extra scenarios.

The change of perspective and unusual setting appealed to the critics, resulting in high scores and awards. Sales have now reached 6.8 million across formats.



VILLAGE

RESIDENT EVIL™

At the time of writing, Capcom's plans for the next in the series are unclear. Franchise fans have been recruited to help test a new game, but that title has since been revealed.

There are two big clues to who could be involved. The executive producer of RE7 Jun Takeuchi spoke about the possible direction of the series in a 'making of RE7' documentary. There are strong hints in the interview that the next game could be produced for VR while retaining the series' trademark survival horror. And in a recent interview, Shinji Mikami was asked if he would return to the franchise — and replied that 'he might'. Other outlets are speculating that the next generation of consoles — PS5 and Xbox Series X — could be the ultimate destination for the next official



numbered RE game, retaining the first-person view of the successful RE7. A German gaming site has claimed the setting will be a snowy Eastern Europe, complete with wolf-like creatures, zombie knights in armour and a more action-oriented approach.

Whatever direction the series does take, we can be sure we will be blasting zombies (caused by bioweapons from Umbrella) for years to come.

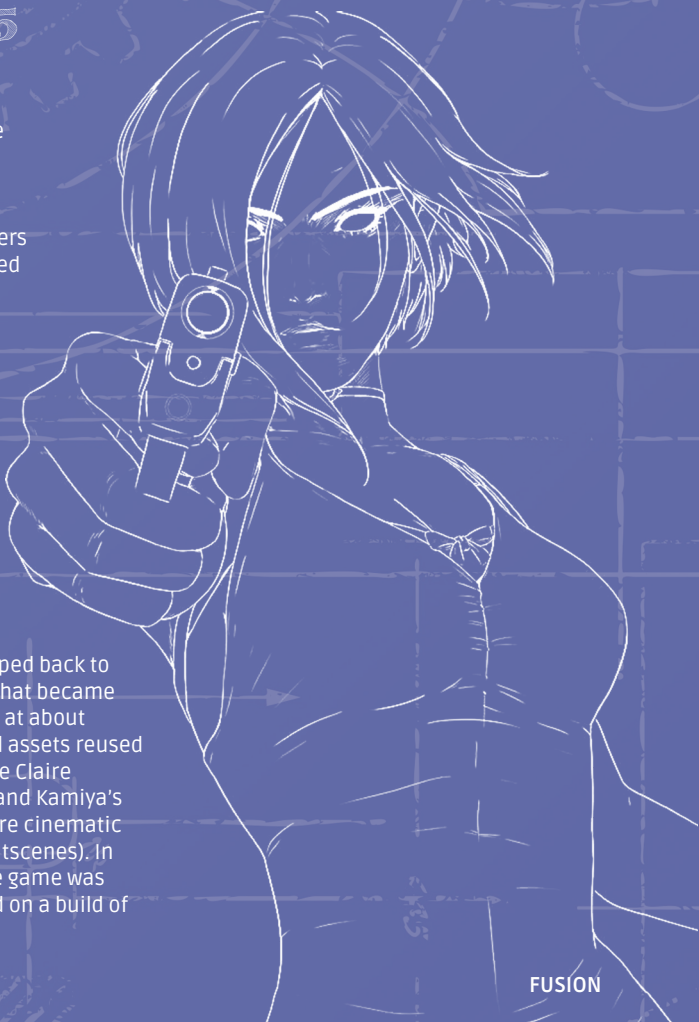


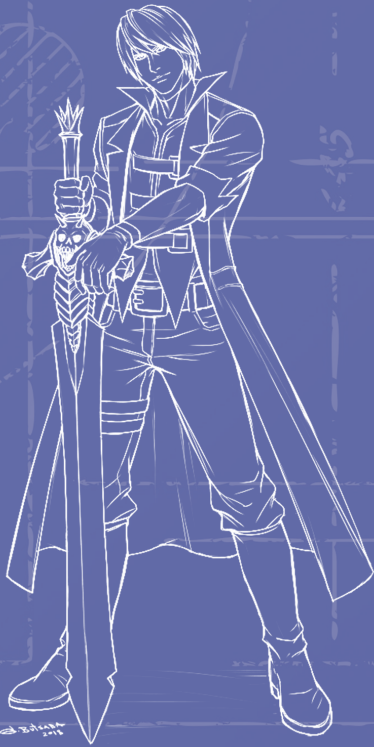
RESIDENT EVIL

UNRELEASED

Resident Evil 1.5

■ Work on a sequel to the first Resident Evil had started in early 1996 and it featured a zombie outbreak in Raccoon City. Players would still control two different characters — cop Leon and college student Elza. However, the characters did not cross paths and encountered two support characters each. The Raccoon City Police Department building was designed to look more modern, rather than being an old building refitted. The creative tension between producer Shinji Mikami and director Hideki Kamiya included the end of the story, which would have precluded making any sequels — and that upset supervisor Yoshiki Okamoto as the game headed towards its planned release date. Mikami stepped back to a hands-off role. Development of what became known as Resident Evil 1.5 stopped at about 60-80% complete, with only limited assets reused in the eventual sequel. Elza became Claire Redfield to tie into the first game, and Kamiya's vision for the game introduced more cinematic presentation (particularly in the cutscenes). In 2013 a downloadable version of the game was released for free, apparently based on a build of the game from inside Capcom.





Resident Evil Devil May Cry

Although Shinji Mikami confirmed in 1999 that a new Resident Evil game was in development, no less than four different versions would be started and scrapped before the final game reached the shelves. Hideki Kamiya wanted a 'cool' action-oriented game and undertook a research trip to Europe, photographing Gothic architecture and other textures. A dynamic camera system was to replace the pre-rendered backgrounds and third-person view favoured by the series. The protagonist was to be Tony, who demonstrated supernatural powers — but Mikami felt the game was straying too far from the series and it's survival horror roots. Kamiya rewrote the story and continued to develop the game independently, calling the hero Dante and setting it in a world full of demons. That game became Devil May Cry and started a whole new franchise

for Capcom.

The second cancelled version, referred to by fans as the 'fog' version, was announced to be one of the Capcom Five — five exclusive GameCube games to be developed by the company. They were the cancelled shoot 'em up Dead Phoenix, P.N. 03 (the only one to remain a GameCube exclusive), Viewtiful Joe, Killer7 and RE4. Director Hiroshi Shibata claims this version was 40% finished, with Leon infiltrating the castle that served as Umbrella's European headquarters. The scenario would have seen Leon infected with the Progenitor virus, unlocking a secret power in his left hand.

The 'hook man' version was shown at E3 in 2003, with Leon fighting paranormal enemies in a haunted house. The game would have included a dialogue system where the player could choose what to say. Footage of the game was included on the Biohazard 4 Secret DVD, a Japanese pre-order bonus with RE4. The third version (known as Hallucination) was a basic story concept and was scrapped by Mikami. The final and fourth casualty returned to a more traditional zombie fighting scenario but was cancelled before it was shown to the public. Mikami took over the directorial duties from Shibata and wanted to take the game in a new direction, introducing the third-person viewpoint and the new Ganado enemies in a script he wrote.

RESIDENT EVIL REMADE

**CRAIG TURNER DISCUSSES
THE REMAKES OF
RESIDENT EVIL 2 AND 3.**

■ Whilst being unique or groundbreaking enough to shine amongst their contemporaries on first arrival, not all hits in the history of video games have been developed enough to make them a successful franchise. Of the ones that do, fewer still have had a team behind them with the ability to evolve a series to successfully carry a genre through system generations and maintain their appeal.

Whilst Japan always had a strong history with narrative-driven games in their penchant for role playing games, the west never widely bought into the more fantastical elements of the stories or of those that were more relatably grounded in reality, the slightly cringeworthy tropes of their perception of western culture. The arrival of the 5th generation consoles however, gave game creators the ability to deliver storylines in far more epic fashion with

CD soundtracks, full motion video, polygonal and detailed rendered graphics plus the storage space of optical media to deliver movie-like stories in a more obvious fashion. Without going into every detail of why Resident Evil found it's initial success (which would be an article in itself), it's the fusion of 'Japanese cop story' meets 'Western B-movie production quality' and the nuances of character stereotypes with cheesy horror coupled with gripping gameplay and the genesis of the conspiracy story arc that made it an international success. The reason that point is worth mentioning is because it's the influence of East on West and vice versa that has been pivotal to the series' continued fortunes and staying true to those origins

that keep the franchise kicking nearly 25 years later.

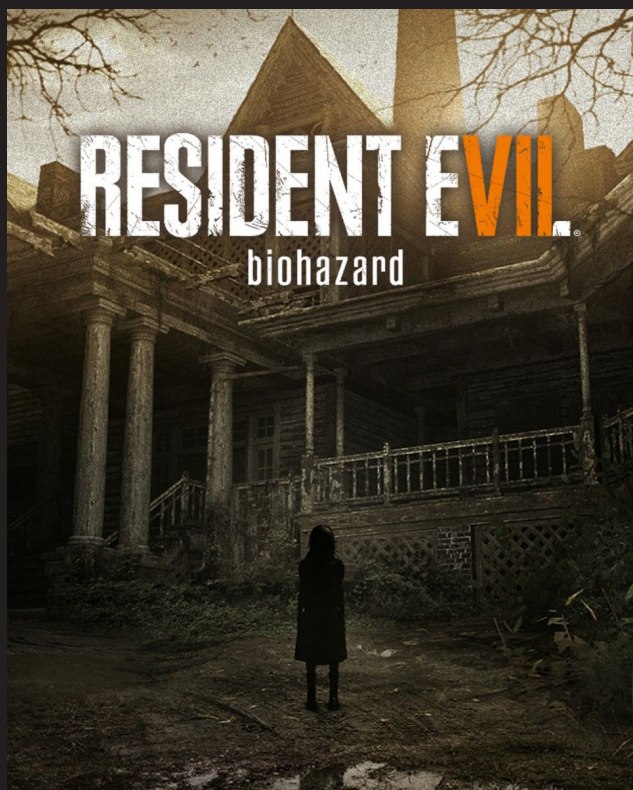
The first immediate sequels took everything that made the first game great and built on the formula to create two games that are considered by many to be two of the highest points of the franchise. Indeed, despite the series moving forever away from the isometric/ fixed camera viewpoint with focus on puzzle solving with the next numbered game (that in itself is also considered a contender for the best game in the entire franchise), Resident Evil 2 is widely considered the fan favourite – and with good reason. Entirely rewritten from scratch after already been taken well into development with an entirely

Below: The less popular Resident Evil 5.



different second character and storyline, the arrival of Leon Kennedy and Claire Redfield had everything in the right measures to make the perfect Resident Evil game. More enemies, more weapons, more puzzles, and a new 'mansion' of sorts but with far more venturing into new confining areas outside of the main building. The defining feature however was the division of paths of the two main characters, creating a total of four separate stories to play through depending on your starting character and how they interacted at key points. With extra modes and all this replay appeal, two likeable characters that players could connect with plus popular supporting characters and major new enemies, it's easy to see why fans revisited it so often and used it as a benchmark for future releases and all survival horrors.

Little wonder then, after a few unsteady years following the less popular RE5 and complete misfire of RE6, that around the same time that Capcom announced the series reboot in 2015 with the first-person Resident Evil 7, series producer Yoshiaki Hirabayashi surprised the world in an infamous video declaring 'We do it!', alluding to the fact they had finally answered the fans' calls; development of a Resident Evil 2 remake was already underway and expected not long after the release of 7. Whilst welcome news, it was at least partly expected. Capcom had previously stated intentions to revisit older titles following the success



Above: Resident Evil 7 — a true return to form by Capcom.

of the first game's remake on the Nintendo GameCube in 2002, where the game had a massive audio-visual overhaul, new gameplay features and brought the original up to the progressing standards of the 6th generation. Originally intending to remake the sequel in the same way immediately afterwards, plans were instead put on the back burner so as not to detract from the efforts put into the evolutionary Resident Evil 4. Undoubtedly the right decision in hindsight with Leon's second series outing reinventing the franchise in a game that still stands up today, it's a safe assumption that a Resident Evil 2 remake was kept as an ace up the sleeve if the

franchise went sour. With one or two lukewarm titles and one absolute bomb not really living up to 4's popularity, the reboot gamble of 7 and it's departure from the main storyline was needed. If it flopped though, Capcom needed something to get everyone back on side. 7 was thankfully a success, but as plan B's go, how did 13 years and a whole lot of anticipation work out?

Eventually arriving worldwide on 25th January 2019, the Resident Evil 2 remake did not disappoint. Showing everyone what 2 decades of tech advancement, 3 console generations, more



than 15 years since the first remake and 4 years of active development can do, the game dropped to universal acclaim and astounded both modern critics and long dedicated fans alike. Utilising the 'RE Engine' developed for Resi 7, the game is every bit a late 8th generation console game of the highest calibre. The graphics, lighting and after-effects are among the highest quality found on the current consoles, with the torchlight navigation of dark areas giving convincing disorientation and glare through the patchy

illumination of enemies against the detailed sets. The binaural sound effects give a deep feeling of fear and immersion as you get a real-time sense of where danger is approaching from, giving the classic jump-scares a terrifying new layer of preceding nervousness. The gameplay takes on the more true-to-life cumbersome movements of Ethan in Resi 7 to make it feel like a much more modern action game, but adds the more accessible combat mechanics and popular third-person shooter

Above: Excuse me Claire, there is someone behind you!

perspective mechanics evolved from Resi 4 so any modern gamer should feel at home.

What makes it such a superb remake though is that it doesn't forget where it comes from. Much like in Hollywood, all the paint and polish in the world can't mask a shallow story, poor character development or bad pacing. In the gaming world it also can't make up for the butchering of story canon, questionable artistic licence or most importantly of all, terrible gameplay. Amazingly, the development team didn't have to answer for any of these sins. From the opening cinematic, it's evident that close attention was paid to the source material. The iconic tanker crash sequence that divides our heroes is there,

Left: Brace, this may hurt a little (if you were alive that is!).



but with added visual impact and an extended prologue that gives an interactive account of how Leon and Claire meet on the Raccoon City outskirts. The greatly improved voice acting gives a more cinematic experience, whilst still paying attention to the character relationships and personalities of the supporting characters like Marvin Branagh and Ada Wong. The entire game has been overhauled to create a new adventure that suits the new mechanics, with the combined threat of both William Birkin and the original game's B-scenario uber-enemy 'Mr. X' threatening the player with their presence from near the very beginning — and no longer bound by doors. Whilst artistic licence has been used to alter some memorable scenarios and some classic enemies canned in favour of increased threat from others, it's all done in favour of making the gameplay flow and reinvigorating the classic jump

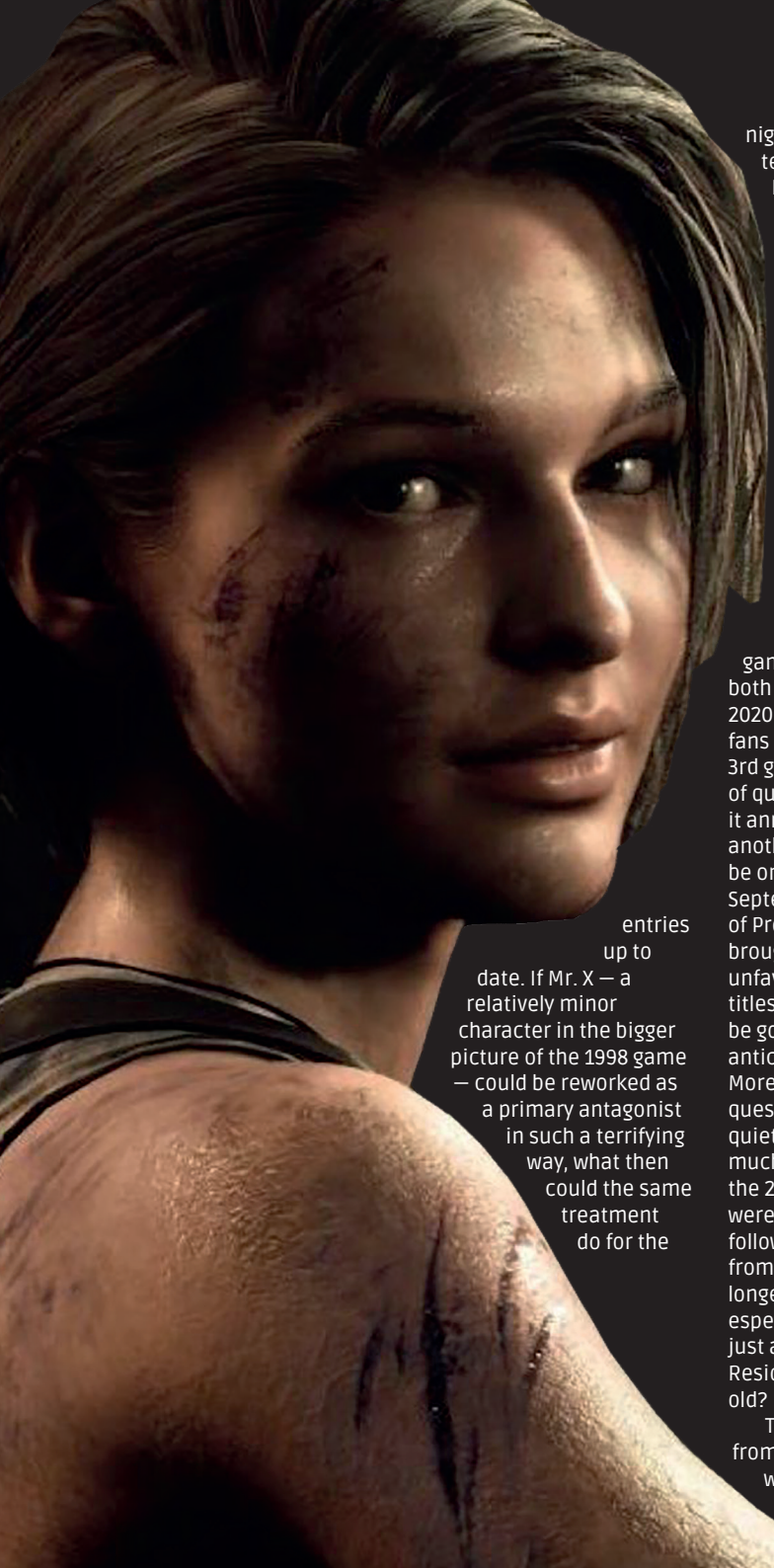
scares the series is known for with a more fitting combative element that doesn't just test your nerves but also your adrenaline response. The new layout and puzzles create an entirely new challenge, whilst all the 'same but somehow different' aesthetics surround you at every turn. The only real issues commented on by gamers of all types was the relative game length. Shorter and slightly more linear than the original game, as well as a hugely not different B-scenario story being noted by fans of the original — this was to expected with the much more action-focused gameplay and presence of the trenchcoated Tyrant from the off. The obligatory DLC of modern gaming made up for this though, with a completely free update called 'Ghost Survivors' in which the possible alternate stories of certain supporting characters is played out in the style of RE3's 'Mercenaries' mode, with new enemy types

and limited pick-ups. New scenarios such as an extended Ada Wong sub-mission and the orphanage also bring a fresh twist to the standard playthrough, rounding up what feels like a very faithful, familiar and yet entirely new and top-end 8th generation console game.

The success of the Resident Evil 2 remake was immediate and rather than just being a safety net for the risky path taken with 7, became a series high point in it's own right that compounded with 7's praised redirection to once again breathe new life into the franchise. Whilst 7 has done the most to prove RE's future viability with genre and story evolution, 2's remake has recaptured the old fans' imaginations and questions inevitably followed about bringing more of the early

Below: Chris having words about his speeding ticket fine!





nightmarish biological terminator that is Nemesis?

Biohazard fans wouldn't have to wait long before they got an answer from Capcom, though not in quite the same excited fashion as Hirabayashi-San a few years prior. Before the year was out, it was announced in an online conference that Resident Evil 3 was coming to PS4 and Xbox One. Not only was it announced that it was on its way — after announcing another game — but that they would both be upon us in Spring of 2020. Whilst exciting news for fans of the polarising original 3rd game, it was met with a lot of questions. Firstly, why was it announced after teasing another new concept billed to be online only? Whilst curious, September's announcement of Project Resistance brought back echoes of the unfavourable PS2 'Outbreak' titles. Surely all efforts should be going into the logical anticipated 3rd remake? More importantly, the main question was why the much quieter announcement and much faster release than the 2nd remake? If Capcom were to make an ideal follow-up, surely they'd learn from the past and allow a longer development time, especially with another title just announced and the new Resident Evil 2 not even a year old?

The concerns came from old school gamers now wise to the production

entries
up to

date. If Mr. X — a relatively minor character in the bigger picture of the 1998 game — could be reworked as a primary antagonist in such a terrifying way, what then could the same treatment do for the



processes that affected their favourite games. Just before the turn of the century, Capcom once enforced 'the crunch' to capitalise on the popularity of the fledgling series. As mentioned previously, the development of the original Resident Evil 2 was restarted mid way through production, and following its release the intended sequel that became Code Veronica got held back until the 6th generation and was dropped from the numerical main series in favour of an extremely hurried 3rd game for the original Playstation. Whilst a good game in itself, marking the return of Jill Valentine, improving the controls in favour of combat, offering an unlockable Mercenaries mini-game and giving the series one of its most popular and imposing bio-weapons in the mighty Nemesis, positive reception was not universal. Signs that the game was rushed included borrowed assets and shared locations

from RE2, no new major plot devices, more linear gameplay and less replay variety owing to the single main protagonist and short game length. It has been commented over the years that with more time, RE3 could potentially have topped RE2 in popularity, particularly with an entire open city as the backdrop. Given Capcom were to get a second chance to right this wrong and had clearly learned a lot with 2 generation-appropriate remakes under their belt, surely this time they could make it so in the closing year of the 8th generation...

Appropriately dropping on 3rd April 2020 during the lockdown of a real-world viral pandemic, Resident Evil 3 remake was bundled with Project Resistance as a free add-on game, albeit separate in concept, plot and gameplay from the numbered titles completely. The game itself once again utilises the RE Engine as was expected, with a whole host of improvements. Firstly, the graphics were

Above: I think I prefer the ride in Alton Towers!

given an overhaul with higher contrast textures than the previous remake, which sacrificed a little of the moody darkness in favour of a more vibrant city backdrop than the predecessor's police station or the 1998 game it was reinventing. This, added to the much smoother environment traversal, more responsive weapon control and much-needed dodge mechanic, greatly improves the increased number of combat sequences much like the original Playstation game. A revised ammo combining system akin to the last remake is the order of the day here; an idea that was actually borrowed from the gunpowder mixing system that was actually first seen in the original RE3. The combat is satisfying and you do get much more of a 'large city' feel from the scenery and mapping this time round — perfect for chases and zombie horde

encounters. Binaural audio also plays into the gameplay again, an essential feature with the increased zombie count and pursuit encounters. Jill returns along with Carlos and both have been given a suitable makeover for 2020, improving their personalities somewhat in the process thanks to some great voice acting and additional supporting cast in the form of the hired Umbrella soldiers and crossover characters Robert Kendo, Brad Vickers and Marvin Branagh. All good so far then... but not quite.

The most anticipated return this time is of course that of the Nemesis himself. Unfortunately, this is where the holes in this game start to appear. Rather than easing you into the new environment and building the severity of the Raccoon City situation before the ultimate enemy drops into your world, your building is collapsing around you and within a minute of gaining control, Nemesis

presents himself and the chase is on. This sounds like it would be a good thing, but much like the complaints aimed at RE6, sometimes 'more' is simply 'too much'. Nemesis' appearance is a little more sensible and made too functional, and it's intelligence seems too calculated somehow. Whilst jump scares were becoming tired by the third game back in the 90s, they are pivotal to the dread of Nemesis' presence and in the remake, much of that is lost in favour of Terminator-like armoured threat. His use of new weapons like the flamethrower are quite cool for the cinematics, but the absence of the terrifying roar or obvious "STARRRRSSSSS!" cries that could break out of a window or be right in your face behind each opened door that the original game had just don't seem to be there. His appearances are a lot more obvious and 'monstrous' this time round, and his mutations far more controlled and

predetermined prior to the final confrontation, lowering his threat factor to that of a standard Tyrant at best. Nemesis complaints aside, there are other faults that detract from the experience you wouldn't expect too. There is an abundance of ammo pickups that never lets you feel unprepared for a confrontation. Whilst combat-focused action commands this, the isolation and resource-conservation that gives the air of desperation needed to invoke survival fear isn't there. There are some welcome enemy returns though, as well as some revisions. The hunters are back and far more lethal than in previous games, the zombies a lot smarter and several mutated versions make these encounters more dangerous, and the Hunter-Gamma toad-like creatures are now hulking

Below: Sneaking through a rather battered Raccoon City.





Above: Flaming 'eck — it's the Nemesis!

great blobs that can literally eat you. This comes at the cost of others though, with the insects reduced to minor challenges at best, the number of direct Nemesis encounters reduced and several major plot points condensed or altered completely (no church interior, no park or Grave Digger, only Carlos visits the R.P.D. building, some sections seem completely devoid of enemies for no reason). Where puzzles and nostalgic nods might otherwise make you ignore these issues though, there's not enough in terms of extra options or nostalgia to make up for that.

So where do the Resident Evil 2 and 3 remakes stand in the wider scope of the franchise, and where do we go from here? Well the consensus does at least seem to be

universal this time. Resident Evil 2 is an outstanding title and a near-perfect remake that ticks enough boxes to invoke nostalgia whilst feeling like a fully-developed, original and modern Resident Evil game that does enough justice to the source material to please long-time fans whilst capturing modern gamers and a new audience. The textbook way to remake a classic game of any kind. Resident Evil 3 once again feels like a missed opportunity that repeats the sins that affected the reception of the original game. What is essentially an incredibly playable and worthy enough game in it's own right, the outsourced development and compressed development time means that the same level of care given to balance nostalgia, fan service and modern gaming demands that 2 got, this unfortunately didn't. The shortcomings are more

obvious and less forgivable than those in the predecessor because of the shorter length, lack of additional extras and level of polish needed to make up for them.

If you are a Resident Evil fan then there's plenty in both titles you will get a lot out of and you'll feel well served in nostalgia from both. If you're a newcomer or modern gamer this is a great way into the series before exploring the new direction taken by 7 and the upcoming number 8. Just be prepared that once you get into the lore and the history of the game, you'll recognise the parity between the production of the remakes and that if the originals, and much like me, you may feel just a little underserved by the all-conquering Nemesis title we will likely never get.

Media that's stuck in the past

Retro Games

Retro Toys

Retro Technology

Retro Television

Obscure Consoles

Rare Computers



/reenthused

